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## FISK JUBILEE SINGERS

By ADA BAUM

The study of folk songs of other nations, and the development of American music has often raised the question, "Does America possess a background of musical material which may be designated as native folk music?" This, in turn, has lead to serious interest in the songs of the Indian and the Negro; and the latter type has been given to the world through the Fisk Jubilee Singers.

At the National Conference, Supervisors will have the rare opportunity of hearing this group of three hundred singers in a program of their own music; and to study this music in the locality and environment in which it originated.



JUBILEE HALL—FISK UNIVERSITY

The Fisk Jubilee Singers organized about forty-five years ago, for the purpose of obtaining means whereby they might further the education of their people. In the intervening years they have traveled through many different countries, winning for their music the respect which it now holds. The majority of the Negro Folk Songs are deeply spiritual, and when we stop to consider that for centuries the Bible has been the only book the Negro was allowed to study, it can be readily understood why he can interpret these songs so very effectively. The ever-present feeling and emotion is created through the desire to acquaint the world with a music which is all their own, something original, separate and apart.

A number of groups of singers from the different schools in the South have adopted the term, "Jubilee," and followed the lead of Fisk in familiarizing the public with the folk-music of the Negro. The fact that, subsequent to the preparatory period, students remain at Fisk University for four years of college training results in the creation of an atmosphere of mature appreciation of their art and the attain-



CHAPEL—FISK UNIVERSITY

ment of a musical expression refined to a degree not dreamed of by any save those who have been privileged to hear this body of singers. The perfect ensemble and the marvelous shading of the Fisk Jubilee Singers has evoked extravagant praise from leading music critics. All phases of their racial regeneration are expressed in song—they sing life; that is why the world loves to hear them sing.

"The folk song of the Negro is characterized by the elements of religion, by rhythm, syncopation and spontaneity: is is the rhythm of this music which has been so generally imitated by composers of today." After hearing the Fisk Jubilee Singers in New York, Dr. Krehbiel of the New York Tribune wrote: "A concert goer might live a life-time without hearing such beautiful homogeneity of tone as that which they produce, nor such euphony, perfection of nuance and precision. Save for its vital human quality, which lifts it above all mechanical productions, their harmony sounds like that of a well-attuned organ, a quartette of instinctively excellent artists are these Fisk Singers."